

PATIENT EDUCATION HANDOUT

How to Stay Healthy as Possible with Hypertension

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Hypertension means you have high blood pressure. Managing hypertension is an important long-term goal to prevent vital organs - such as the eyes, heart and kidneys - from receiving damage. In addition to taking medication, there are also several lifestyle changes you can make to decrease blood pressure.

TAKE MEDICATION REGULARLY

- Taking the medication prescribed by your doctor is key to decreasing blood pressure.
- Set up a pill box to help save time and organize which medication you take on specific days throughout the week.

MEASURE BLOOD PRESSURE AT HOME

- Ask your doctor how many times a day or week you should be recording your blood pressure. Ideally, measurements should be done at the same time each day so that the numbers can be compared.
- Make sure to sit down and relax for at least five minutes before measuring your blood pressure. Write down those measurements and bring them to your doctor appointment.

EAT A HEALTHY DIET

- Limit salt consumption to one teaspoon per day, which is 2,300 grams of sodium.
- The American Heart Association promotes a special diet called the Dietary Approach to Stop Hypertension. This diet emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low-fat dairy products.

EXERCISE

- Exercise at a moderate intensity level - meaning you can talk in brief sentences while working out - for at least 30 minutes, five days a week.
- Add weight training to your exercise regimen by using resistance bands or weights.

DECREASE OR STOP TOBACCO USE AND ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

- If you are currently smoking and interested in quitting, ask your doctor about nicotine patches and gums.
- If you drink alcohol, the recommended consumption is no more than two drinks per day for men and one drink per day for women.

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